

Subject: Ships Colonies + Commerce tokens
(S.C.+C.)

Lees, William A.D.

1915-1935

[Red Deer, Alberta, Canada]



Red Deer, Alberta, Canada,

1 November, 1915.

Howland Wood, Esq.,

C/o American Numismatic Society,

Broadway at 156th. St.,

New York City,

Dear Sir,

Mr. Duffield has asked me to contribute to the Numismatist a list of the Ships Colonies & Commerce tokens, to which I have been giving some attention lately, and he has offered to illustrate it from any coins I may send him. Of course, I would have been all at sea had it not been for Mr. Gibbs's list and, more particularly, your admirable chart which has been of the greatest service to me.

May I put myself under a still greater obligation by asking you one or two questions? First, with regard to the enclosed coin; I bought it for your No. 4 on the chart but the obverse differs from No. 4 in the following particulars; pennant straighter with no sign of the hollow next the mast nor the split point; ball on mizzen-mast does not hang over to right; mis-cut line projects from stern; upper wave at left projects farther and ends like an alligator's jaws; lower wave sharper; exergual lines do not end equally at left and are farther from border. I happened, for an-

H. W.
2.



other purpose, to look at your book on the Blacksmiths and the cut of the ship of your No. 9 in that series caught my eye, particularly the line running down to left from the flagstaff, which almost exactly corresponds to the depression in the same place on my coin. Do you think it is the same ship? If so, we have a new combination in the Blacksmith series, which I suppose might be called 9a. I enclose a B. 997, W. 4, for comparison in case you have not one handy when you get this.

May I ask another question? Was there any particular reason why B. 999 and 1000 were not included in your chart? It seems to me if they are genuine ~~there~~ they are as much a part of the series as 997. So, for that matter, are 998 and 1002. What do you think? I have written Breton about 999 and 1000 but have not yet had his answer.

Mr. S. S. Heal has given me a lot of help in the study of this series and has offered to lend me pieces for illustration where I am short but I am afraid even then we will lack some of the reverses of W. 33-40. Do you know where any of these could be bought? I had rather omit the illustrations than have them incomplete and would not think of them at all if your chart was still in print and the negative unbroken.

Thanking you in anticipation, I am

Yours sincerely,

W. A. D. Lees
(W. A. D. Lees)

I have learned of 1 new combination obs. of 26 Rev of 17
in Dr Courteaus coll.

Sold mine to W W C Wilson ship + blacksmiths
My Blacksmith No 9 was so faint I could not make out every detail
and took it for granted it was my SC+C # 3-4 obs. Your
coin convinces me that the two are either different dies or
what is more probable Blacksmith 9 is SC+C # die recent.
Why I consider Black 9 the latter or recent die is on account
of the crack which is just starting on your piece but
had spread over much of the center on my Black 9.
Wiping out most of the flag and pennant.

I have forgotten now just why I did not include my SC+C #
in my blacksmiths. Probably so as not to have the same piece in
the 2 series. You however can safely draw a line connecting
9 + 10 and call it 9a

I have never seen ^{genuine} Boston 999 and 1000 McLachlan
claims they are false

I excluded 998 1002 & 1003 as there would have been
no end to the series for and 995 & 996 might then
go in, however I

Courteaus & McL are probably the only ones who could
help you out with illustrations coins.

Nov. 8, 1915.

Mr. William A. D. Lees

Red Deer,

Alberta,

Canada.

Dear Sir:-

Your letter about Ships Colonies and Commerce tokens at hand. Although I cannot help you out as much as I would like I think I can help you sufficiently.

Shortly after writing my Blacksmith article I sold both my collections of Blacksmiths and S.C. & C. tokens to Mr. W. W. C. Wilson of Montreal. Hereafter I will refer to blacksmiths as Blk.

My Blk. no. 9 was originally so lightly struck that very little of the detail could be really relied upon to work out minute differences. As I remember it., I took it for granted it was my S.C. & C., 3 & 4 Obv. Your coin now convinces me that it was the same obverse die as the piece you have on account of the break beside the flag. This break on mine was more pronounced than yours and blotted out a good deal of the detail in the centre of the coin and extended to the pennant at the top. My experience with Blks. has been that not as many dies were used as it would seem but the dies being made by inexperienced people, were shallowly cut and improperly hardened. Also the coins being manufactured in shops not fitted for striking, more strain came on the dies than if they were used in regular coin manufacturing places. Also less care was taken of these dies so that consequently they became defaced and rusted, and I am also inclined to think that the dies were used again after an interval of several years combined with new reverses and new pieces struck. I am therefore inclined to think your specimen of my Blk. 9 is simply a recut die of my S. C. & C. 3 & 4 when brought into play again some years later. On the count of the larger break on my Blk. 9 I think my combination showing head was struck a little after your combination showing S.C. & C. reverse. You are therefore quite right in considering this a Blacksmith and calling it 9² and you can draw a line connecting these two sides of the coins. Also you can include it in the S. C. & C. series, stating also that it is a true Blacksmith. You have most likely noticed that I did not include my S. C. & C. 3 and 4 in with the Blks. This was partly because I had already placed them in the S.C. & C. group and also I intuitively considered them as being earlier and not exactly Blacksmiths. Your discovery to my mind substantiates my view. You can add to the S.C. & C. group a new combination that Dr. Courteau discovered a few years ago. It has Obv. of my 26 combined with the Rev. of my 17.

Why I did not include Breton 999 and 1000 was because I had no specimen to photograph, nor have I ever seen a genuine specimen. Also much doubt has been cast on these two pieces. Mc Lachlan claims they are fabrications and I understand Breton when Balled to account, has kept silent about these. I excluded 998, 1002 and 1003 as they only showed one side in common with the S.C. & C. series and if I showed this I would have had to show the various ramifications that these went into. Also I would have had to have shown I think with equal justice, 995 and 996.

Outside of a few Canadians I know of no one who can help you except Mc Lachlan, Heal and Courteau. Courteau probably has most of my varieties between 33 and 40. Wilson has most of them any way but he is virtually impossible to get anything out of Wilson.

I am enclosing a list I drew up at the time as to what I considered degrees of rarity. Probably you will not wholly agree with me as regards my conclusions, nevertheless it ought to furnish you with some information. Do not hesitate to call upon me if you require anything else. I am returning you two coins.

I remain,

Very truly yours,



Red Deer, Alberta, Canada,

21 November, 1915.

Dear Mr. Wood,

Many thanks for your kind letter of 8th. inst. re Ships Colonies & Commerce series. I have been on circuit since I got it, hence too busy to thank you for it before. It will be of great service to me, especially the list of degrees of rarity. I will use it to modify my own, based on the combined experience of Mr. Heal and myself.

You will think me very greedy when I ask another favor. If we are short one or two reverses of your 33-40 series may we copy them from your chart, making, of course, proper acknowledgment?

Since I got back my Blk. 9a, I have examined it again and found two new features which I think confirm my idea that it is an imitation rather than a re-cut die of W. 3 & 4. There is more space between lower edge of flag and deck than in 3&4 and the after brace of the mizzen-mast meets the flag-staff instead of the deck.

In writing to Dr. Courteau some time ago I happened to mention the combination of your 26 x 17 and he answered that it was new to him. He seems to wear the glories of a discoverer lightly.

I was lucky enough to pick up a W. 41 on Saturday.

Yours sincerely,

Spadbees

P. S. Briton also credited giving me any definite information re 999 & 1000. Dr. L. says how odd that 999 some years ago for \$75.00 and the regrets not having taken it - of course.

December, 1, 1915.

Mr. A. D. Lees
Red Deer,
Alberta,
Canada.

My dear Mr. Lees:-

Pardon my detail in not acknowledging your letter of November 21st before this.

You are at perfect liberty to make use of any of the coins depicted on my photograph and I trust that you can get satisfactory reproductions from them.

I desire to congratulate you on picking up No. 41 of the S.C. & C. series. I consider this piece the rarest of the whole lot.

I am not at all surprised to hear that Breton has given you satisfaction. To tell you the truth, he couldn't very well without getting himself into a box because his attention has been called to several errors etc., ever since his book has come out, and for the sake of economy and the money making side of it, he has wantonly carried on these same errors in that cheap reprint he got out a few years ago. Although Breton has done a good deal for Canadian Numismatics, to my mind he has done the series a lot of harm by including everything his attention has been called to without thoroughly digesting the matter before hand.

I remain,

Very truly yours,

September 26, 1935.

Hon. William A. D. Lees
Wetaskiwin, Alberta,
Canada.

Dear Sir:

Mr. Alfred Z. Reed has just written us asking is if we had in our library the photographs you made of the "Ships, Colonies and Commerce" tokens as he had suggested that you should send the set of photographs to this library. We find that you have already sent us this set of photographs.

Very truly yours,

HW:JG

Curator